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ABSTRACT

This research report examines the current use in secondary schools of the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) nine-chapter booklet, "Understanding Taxes," and the complementary six program videos, "Tax Whys," and offers suggestions for updating the video programs. The review begins with telephone interviews of the IRS Taxpayer Education Coordinators and Joint Council of Economic Education Center Directors to establish their roles in the promotion of the videos, their comments on the programs, and their suggestions for new programs. The needs assessment also included two field studies conducted in San Francisco (California) and North Carolina to determine the extent of secondary school use of the booklet and the videos. The findings indicate a wider use of the booklet than the videos in the classroom. The final conclusions are that the booklet and video programs need to be promoted as complementary and that the teacher's guide should incorporate both materials. Suggested topics for the new video programs include how to complete tax forms, where does tax money go, how tax legislation is created, the history of taxation, the relationship of taxation and fiscal policy, and the taxation systems of different countries. Appendices contain: (1) the telephone interview questionnaire; (2) North Carolina Curriculum Guide (Taxpayer Education Selection); (3) Tax Profile from "Tax Whys" Teacher's Guide; and (4) percentage breakdown of all survey items. (DJC)

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Research Report

Number 97

Tax Education

An Assessment of Needs at the Secondary Level

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Research Report #97

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Introduction

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax education system now exists in two parts. *Understanding Taxes* is a nine-chapter booklet distributed to schools by the IRS. It is used in secondary social studies, economics, business, government, and home economics or vocational education classes, and occasionally in mathematics classes. It covers a wide range of topics from the American history of taxation and the need for taxation to pay for government services to the rights and responsibilities of taxpayers and how to fill out 1040 forms. By far the most common use of *Understanding Taxes* is in teaching students how to fill out tax forms.

The second part of the taxation curriculum is the series of six video programs called ***Tax Whys***. It is used almost exclusively in economics classes and is distributed either through a state department of public instruction or through a state's system of Centers for Economic Education. Distribution systems vary from state to state. Rooted more in economic theory than *Understanding Taxes* is, the video programs are intended as a supplement to it. Among the topics in ***Tax Whys*** are what is a fair tax, how taxes can be shifted from one place to another, and how taxation can influence a person's purchasing decisions.

In preparation for developing three new ***Tax Whys*** programs, AIT asked users of the presently available materials about their needs. What follows is a report of that study.

Despite the designers' original intent that the ***Tax Whys*** video should supplement the *Understanding Taxes* booklets, the two parts of the curriculum were perceived by very few teachers or administrators in this study as part of the same set of instructional materials. Therefore, one question addressed in this report will be, "How can the two parts of the curriculum be developed and distributed so that educators will begin seeing them as a part of the same curricular unit?" Second, this report will consider the possibility that there are benefits to the present perception of the tax education curriculum as being in two separate parts, and will ask, "What is the best use of the tax education curriculum, given that few people in education see the two parts as meant for the same type of course?"

Additionally, this report will describe the content and nature of use of the tax education materials.

Understanding Taxes: Background Information

Understanding Taxes is a taxpayer education program aimed primarily at high school students. Since its inception over 30 years ago, *Understanding Taxes* has undergone significant expansion and modification.

Understanding Taxes began in 1954 in response to teacher demand for materials on taxation. The first materials were circulated to teachers in the Washington, D. C., area. By the late 50s, materials were being distributed nationwide. The initial scope of the project dealt with instruction on "taxpayer rights and responsibilities." The materials were designed to be incorporated as a unit into existing high school curricula.

In 1981, a study was undertaken to determine whether modifications were needed to make the program more useful. As a result, the course was expanded and reorganized. Topics covered in the revised format included "Taxpayer Responsibilities and Rights," "How to Prepare an Income Tax Return," "History of Taxation," "Economics of Taxation," "Politics of Taxation," "State Taxes," and "Current Issues in Taxation."

Teacher and student guides were revised and are currently presented in a modular format. Teachers can easily incorporate the materials into classes according to their needs. By increasing the number of topics covered, the IRS has developed a program that can be used in a variety of courses such as government, mathematics, business, and economics.

To supplement the available print materials, the IRS commissioned the development of two sets of videos. The first of these is a set of three ***Understanding Taxes*** programs that depict the history of taxation in the United States, the history of taxation in the world, and the system of payroll withholding in the United States. These programs are now obsolete.

The second set of videos, ***Tax Whys: Understanding Taxes***, was completed in 1985. This six-part video series dramatizes various issues such as the use of tax revenues, tax credits and how they influence behavior, taxation and conflicting goals, and different types of taxes. When the programs were released, teacher-training workshops were provided at the state level to give teachers the necessary background to use them effectively.

In 1986, the teacher's guide for the booklet *Understanding Taxes* was revised to coordinate with the ***Tax Whys*** videos. Within each of the nine chapters of *Understanding Taxes*, notes indicate when it is appropriate to use a ***Tax Whys*** program and describe the video program. These descriptions suggest topics for discussion before and after viewing and provide vocabulary and other commentary.

Today, *Understanding Taxes* is used by millions of students in over 21,000 public and private schools in the U.S. and overseas. The teacher's guide and student booklet, available in a "Sunday magazine" format, are revised each year to provide up-to-date information. *Understanding Taxes* is especially relevant for high school juniors and seniors, many of whom will be entering the work force for the first time. In addition, the materials are useful for other grade levels, interested civic organizations, and small businesses.

Summary of Telephone Interviews

A significant part of the ***Tax Whys*** needs assessment consisted of telephone interviews with IRS Taxpayer Education Coordinators and Joint Council of Economic Education Center Directors around the country.

One assumption AIT carried into the interview process was that the coordinators and center directors are primary sources for distributing taxpayer education materials to teachers.

The IRS employs coordinators at various district offices throughout the United States, and each state has at least one IRS Taxpayer Education Coordinator. One of the principal functions of this person is to coordinate dissemination and presentation of the *Understanding Taxes* materials and other taxpayer education materials.

Schools and other organizations contact the district offices to obtain copies of the materials. In addition, most of the Taxpayer Education Coordinators contacted said that their offices would provide speakers to interested organizations upon request.

Each interview of a coordinator or center director lasted about 15 minutes. A questionnaire was developed to provide some structure and consistency to the interviews. (See Appendix A.) The questionnaire had a number of specific questions such as "How many teachers are

you in contact with?" or "How many schools in your area have a complete set of ***Tax Whys***?" However, after the questionnaire was used for several weeks, it was decided that the interviews should be more informal. The remainder of the interviews were conducted without questionnaires. In the new interview format, the interviewers sought answers and comments on questions of a more general nature.

Each interviewee was asked: "How does your job relate to taxpayer education materials?" One reason for using this question was for the reporters to get a sense of how taxpayer education materials were being disseminated. Another motivation was to learn what kinds of things IRS coordinators and JCEE center directors were doing in the area of taxpayer education. Finally, this question served as a means of determining how the scope of the two positions differed in relation to taxpayer education.

A follow-up question to the first was: "What are some of the materials that you use and distribute most commonly?" The only materials mentioned were *Understanding Taxes* and ***Tax Whys***, and so this question was replaced with: "What do you think of the *Understanding Taxes* booklet?" "What do you think of the ***Understanding Taxes*** video?" and "What do you think of ***Tax Whys***?" If the interviewee was unfamiliar with any of these three, the interview was then concluded with a final question: "What are some suggestions that you have for topics in the new tax videos?"

Persons familiar with *Understanding Taxes* and ***Tax Whys*** were asked about the print and video components of each program to determine whether they liked or used the materials. In particular, people were asked their opinions of the *Understanding Taxes* student booklets, *Understanding Taxes* teacher's guide, ***Tax Whys*** teacher's guide, and ***Tax Whys*** workshop leader's handbook.

Finally, each person was asked for suggested topics to cover in the new videos and for any further comments or suggestions.

Responses of the IRS Education Coordinators

Some of the IRS coordinators interviewed stated that they kept track of the schools that ordered *Understanding Taxes*. Coordinators who did this also sent letters to nonparticipating schools, encouraging them to order the materials. All the IRS coordinators who had some idea of the participation in their area said the percentage of participating schools was very high.

According to IRS coordinators, the *Understanding Taxes* booklets were very popular and widely studied in high school economics classes. In these classes, the material on filling out forms was used most heavily. Civics, government, history, and mathematics classes often used the material as supplementary to other information. In many cases the bulk of the printed material was not being used; however, several officials found the information (especially on the history of taxation) helpful for presentations to interested organizations and groups. Some of the coordinators said they sometimes received requests for their materials from adult education instructors. Also, several IRS centers periodically conducted small business workshops.

The three ***Understanding Taxes*** programs ("The Subject Was Taxes," "What Happened to My Paycheck?" and "Money Talks") were generally considered obsolete. A few coordinators said they had occasional requests for "What Happened to My Paycheck?" from high school senior economics classes. Teachers have found this film useful in the past for students who are entering the work force for the first time. However, IRS coordinators who had requests for this film said it is too "dated" to be of much use now.

Most IRS coordinators had heard about the ***Tax Whys*** programs but were not very familiar with them. In some instances the IRS center dealt solely with the booklet, referring requests for video or films to a "media center" where copies of the ***Tax Whys*** and ***Understanding Taxes*** programs were kept.

IRS coordinators who were familiar with ***Tax Whys*** were much impressed with it. One commented, "The videos are shown several times a month on the educational television channel in our area. They are shown more frequently on teacher request; generally, there is more demand to see the videos in the first part of the year." Another commented, "Our office does not handle the ordering and distribution of ***Tax Whys*** videos, but they must be very popular because we have received a number of requests for them." One coordinator stated that the videos helped to illustrate a number of different topics in taxation. Topics she thought were especially well illustrated were "Why are there taxes, what are taxes used for, and how are individuals affected by taxes?" None of the IRS interviewees knew ***Tax Whys*** well enough to comment on specific programs.

Responses of Joint Council Center Directors

In addition to IRS Taxpayer Education Coordinators, a number of Joint Council Center Directors were interviewed. Their activities in relation to disseminating and presenting taxpayer education materials differed slightly from those of the IRS coordinators. One important aspect of JCEE activities was organizing and presenting workshops. Many of the Joint Council directors stated that they periodically conducted workshops in the use of ***Tax Whys***. These workshops were generally conducted for high school teachers. In addition, most said they conducted workshops when ***Tax Whys*** first came out. A few directors commented that they had offered these initial workshops but had done no follow-up workshops due to a lack of interest and participation.

Several directors mentioned that they conducted workshops for persons other than high school teachers. For example, one center offered workshops on a regular basis, which could be taken for college credit. Persons enrolling in these workshops included teachers, owners of small businesses, and clergy.

Joint Council on Economic Education Center Directors were, in general, more familiar with the ***Tax Whys*** videos than were the IRS Taxpayer Education Coordinators. All who were familiar with them found them very helpful and well done. In addition, these people were unanimous in their praise of the teacher's guide and workshop leader's handbook. When asked for suggestions on printed material to accompany the new videos, the center directors overwhelmingly responded that the format used in the ***Tax Whys*** print would work very well.

Many of the JCEE interviewees preferred "Taxes...Can They Be Shifted?" (***Tax Whys*** program #5). One director commented that it "goes deeper than just the mechanics of filling out tax forms...it is very important to consider how taxation affects individuals." Other favorites included "Taxes Raise Revenue" and "Taxes Influence Behavior." An interviewee commented, "I think it is most important to consider why there are taxes and what they are used for." Another person said, "I think the range of topics covered in ***Tax Whys*** is very representative of the most important issues in taxation."

"Taxes Affect Different Income Groups" (#4) was the least popular of the six programs. A number of directors commented that they found it confusing. All thought that the topic of the video (three different kinds of taxes) was very important and that it might be good to produce a new video on this same topic.

One problem in making teachers aware of ***Tax Whys***, which several directors mentioned, was the low participation in workshops. When asked about this situation, one director said it might be useful to have a "video sampler" for ***Tax Whys***, perhaps similar to "About ***Trade-offs.***" This would give teachers a general idea of the types of information presented in the videos; also, it could excite the educators about teaching taxation.

Suggestions for New Video Programs

There were a number of different suggestions for topics in the new programs. One common suggestion was to look at the "economics of taxation." Different people seemed to be talking about different things when they used this phrase.

One of the subtopics under this heading was tax legislation. Several people commented that it might be interesting to show how and why tax laws are enacted. An IRS Education Coordinator thought demonstrating that the IRS does not make tax laws might help "soften" the image of the IRS.

Another subtopic under "economics of taxation" was the impact of economic policy on individuals. Interviewees thought that examples like those demonstrated in "Taxes..Can they Be Shifted?" would be particularly interesting and appropriate. Several people commented that it would be very good to include the new tax legislation, particularly, how the new tax laws might affect individuals and businesses. An example cited by one JCEE director was to consider how the new law on investment tax credits would affect small businesses. A possibility mentioned by an IRS coordinator was to consider the possible effect of new tax laws on those entering the work force for the first time.

Some people suggested a video program on tax systems of other countries and how they compare to that of the United States. A man who mentioned comparing the United States and Japanese tax systems also suggested considering "the percent of gross national product that is channeled through government and how this compares to other countries." Along the same line, another person pointed out that it would be significant to portray the effects of taxation on investment and saving, both in the United States and in other countries.

Two of the IRS interviewees said that it might be helpful somewhere in the new videos to illustrate "volunteer tax assistance," a program used in several different parts of the country. In volunteer tax assistance, teachers and other interested individuals donate their time to help individuals fill out their tax forms.

Some suggestions were made specifically about ***Tax Whys***. Many interviewees said "Taxes Affect Different Income Groups" was their least favorite of the ***Tax Whys*** programs; however, several persons thought it was important to discuss regressive, progressive, and proportional taxes. They suggested producing a new program on these different types of taxes.

The other suggestions for ***Tax Whys*** were more general: Be sure that the information presented is still valid in the new tax setting. Where necessary, provide more current information in the new videos. And "try to maintain a theme or overall sense of considering things that will be practical and relevant, especially for high school students."

Field Studies

Two field studies were a part of the needs assessment. One was a two-day study in the San Francisco area and the other was a four-day study in the state of North Carolina.

When the telephone interviews began, the investigators knew that *Understanding Taxes* and ***Tax Whys*** were parts of the same curriculum but were administered through different channels. Consequently, it was presumed that personnel in the two separate channels would, on occasion, work together. This turned out to be wrong. Not only do they not work together, but it is rare that they even know each others' names. In North Carolina, however, the Taxpayer Education Coordinator (TPEC) and the Director of the North Carolina Council on Economic Education (CEE) knew each other and had an occasional working relationship. Therefore, North Carolina was selected as a field-study site.

San Francisco was chosen as a site because a city-wide workshop was being held and ***Tax Whys*** was to be presented at the workshop. A change was made in the agenda, however, and ***Tax Whys*** was not presented. Nevertheless, in the two days of this study, a classroom was visited and interviews were conducted with IRS and CEE personnel and with teachers. Most important about the San Francisco field study, however, may be the information that was learned about the prevailing attitudes toward workshops and about the effects of these attitudes on the distribution of ***Tax Whys***.

North Carolina

A preliminary trip to North Carolina was made before Christmas to set up the North Carolina field trip. The occasion for this preliminary trip was a meeting of all the CEE Directors in Greensboro. The North Carolina TPEC was also invited to this meeting so that the field investigator would have the chance to meet all the people involved in the distribution of the materials before the actual field study was conducted.

At this meeting, the Director of the North Carolina Council said that no study of the needs in taxpayer education could be conducted without an understanding of the position of taxpayer education in the overall curriculum. He stood at the blackboard and drew two wavy lines, parallel to and about a foot apart from each other. "This is a river which represents the secondary school curriculum. Flowing into this river is a social studies tributary." (He drew a "river" about five inches wide.) "Into the social studies tributary flows a river of economics along with rivers of history, consumer economics, sociology, and others." (He drew "rivers" about an inch wide.) He then drew one squiggly line attached to the economics river saying, "That's how much of econ taxation is." He then went on to say that if there were any problems or needs with taxpayer education in the secondary schools, they might be explained by the position of tax education in the overall curriculum.

There was general agreement with this perception, and plans for the field study proceeded in this light. A four-day trip was planned, including one day each in the Asheville, Wilkesboro, Raleigh, and Greensboro areas. North Carolina is divided into eight geographic regions by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Each region has a Center for Economic Education and a DPI social studies curriculum supervisor. CEE personnel work through DPI staff to contact schools. Teachers in North Carolina may obtain copies of the ***Tax Whys*** programs through the DPI or through the local CEE.

In the Asheville area, the CEE director and the DPI social studies curriculum supervisor facilitate workshops together and have presented ***Tax Whys*** to teachers in several schools. There is, however, exceedingly small use of ***Tax Whys***. The reason for the dearth of ***Tax Whys*** usage seems to be directly related to the belief of the DPI supervisor. He considers ***Tax Whys*** biased and discourages teachers from using it. Because of his attitude, a meeting was arranged for Monday afternoon of the first day of the field trip. The meeting was cancelled that Monday morning, however, because the DPI supervisor said he was ill.

The day at North Wilkesboro was far more productive. In that region the CEE director and the DPI supervisor have an effective relationship and seem to work together quite well. Visits were made to three rural or small-town schools.

The first meeting was at the Newton-Conover Public Schools. Social studies teachers were gathered at a workshop that day, and four were given permission to leave the workshop to talk about their needs in taxpayer education. All four had heard of *Understanding Taxes* and ***Tax Whys*** although none of them used either series. In two of the schools, *Understanding Taxes* was used in business classes, mathematics, and vocational education. In the fourth school, *Understanding Taxes* was described as "languishing in the library." All four teachers agreed on the reasons they personally did not use either of the series.

1. Their perception of *Understanding Taxes* was that its aim was to help students fill out forms and that it lacked the right content for economics.

2. They all used video programs in economics but chose not to use ***Tax Whys*** because they were already using a different video series and didn't want to give up any more class time to television.

One teacher knew that the "Introduction to Business" teacher in her school used *Understanding Taxes* every year. She said he had always been glad that such good materials were available at no cost. She was also fairly certain that he used the materials only to teach students how to fill out their forms. A call to that business teacher later in the day confirmed her opinion. When asked why he didn't use the supplementary video programs called ***Tax Whys*** he responded that he had never heard of them. He said that if a supplementary video was available he would find two topics particularly useful: how to fill out the tax forms and how the taxes are collected and where they go.

The next stop was at Newton Public Schools (not the same as the Newton-Conover School District). There were two teachers at Newton High School who use *Understanding Taxes* but neither had ever heard of ***Tax Whys***. Both of these teachers reiterated the "teach students how to fill out forms" use of the materials. They felt that teaching student how to fill out 1040s was "more citizenship education than economics education" but that it might as well occur in economics courses as anywhere else.

One of these teachers offered the observation that students enjoyed filling out 1040s because it was new to them and was a hands-on experience. She said that because economics was a

course with few hands-on activities, the 1040 forms actually helped the students enjoy the course and motivated them to study economics.

These teachers read through a list describing the six ***Tax Whys*** programs. After doing so, but before being asked what she thought should be added to the list, one teacher asked, "Why isn't there anything in here about the history of taxation in this country? That would seem to fit in pretty well and I imagine not just economics teachers could use it." The other teacher joined the conversation with, "Yes, I also thought there ought to be something about the federal deficit and trade imbalance and how those things are affected by taxation."

At West Caldwell High School in Lenoir, North Carolina, something happened that graphically illustrates how ***Tax Whys*** and *Understanding Taxes* are perceived as being separate from each other. Several of the business teachers at West Caldwell used *Understanding Taxes*. In a meeting with the principal and two of the business teachers, the investigator asked whether either of the teachers used "the supplementary video programs called ***Tax Whys***." Both teachers said they didn't know that supplementary video programs were available. This situation created some concern for the principal, who asked the investigator to make sure that in the future his teachers would be informed about any supplementary materials.

About an hour later, the investigator met with one of the economics teachers at the same high school only to discover that she was using ***Tax Whys***. She liked it but didn't use all six programs. She especially liked the program about investment credits because it put taxes in an applied setting. When told that the program was now obsolete, she said she hoped it would be replaced with another one showing that taxes actually affect the decisions people make. She also said that she would like to see ***Tax Whys*** emphasize vocabulary more by putting new words on the screen more often. As for new programs, she had two ideas: 1) filling out 1040s and 2) an overview of the types of taxes students will pay, such as income, property, sales, and excise taxes.

Later that day, the CEE director and the DPI social studies curriculum supervisor discussed the tax education system with the investigator. When the investigator walked into the meeting, the two men were discussing a grant application for funds to conduct teacher in-service training.

Much of the discussion about taxpayer education centered on the relation between *Understanding Taxes* and ***Tax Whys***. These men suggested that if the two series were rarely

perceived as being part of the same package, that may be satisfactory. They pointed out that two series of limited relationship to each other would reach a greater audience. As for new program topics, they first suggested that topics be chosen to complement the existing ***Tax Whys*** programs without concern for their relation to *Understanding Taxes*. Specifically, both men suggested that a program that related taxation to fiscal issues such as income inequality, elasticity of goods, and the budget deficit would fit very well into the secondary economics curriculum. They disagreed about a second choice. The center director thought that a program comparing the U.S. tax system to that of other countries could be quite effective, whereas the DPI curriculum supervisor thought a program showing the various types of taxes in the U.S. might be more appropriate.

A classroom visitation was made the next day at Sanderson High School in Raleigh. The class was a one-semester economics course for eleventh- and twelfth-grade students. On the day of the visit, the teacher showed the first program in the ***Tax Whys*** series, "Taxes Raise Revenue."

The teacher closely followed the teacher's guide suggestions as he conducted the class. He told the students that the program showed how taxes were needed to support public projects and that they would learn something about the concept of opportunity cost in the program. As he asked questions, the students sat silently until he asked, "What is your connotation of taxes?" The students chorused "They're bad," and they began to describe taxes as:

- "Money the government adds to the price of things."
- "Money the government takes out of your paycheck."
- "Money that comes back to us through social security."

Students made three lists on the blackboard: things that are taxed; which level of government places the tax; and things that are paid for by the tax. Students were able to list six or eight things that can be taxed: sales, income, property, gasoline, cigarettes, imports, etc. They thought that most taxes were levied by the federal government and only a few by the state. They had very little awareness of local taxation. When it came to identifying where taxes went, students identified the following in chronological order: missiles, social security, nuclear weapons, education, salaries, research activities, operational expenses of the government.

Following this activity, the teacher told the students to pay attention, as they watched the program, to characters' rationales for being in favor of or opposed to an increase in

property taxes. After reiterating that the rationales for opposing or favoring the tax increase were more important than the actual issues in the program. He then turned the set on and let the students watch the program.

After the program, the teacher asked students whether they agreed or disagreed with the views presented. Students discussed their own views on property taxes and many agreed that whether a person would be for or against a tax increase would depend on an individual perspective. There seemed to be a lot of understanding about why taxation issues can become so volatile. The teacher asked the students to identify how the program demonstrated opportunity cost and then quickly handed out the homework before the class bell rang. The homework was the pie-chart activity sheet from the teacher's guide.

After class, the teacher told investigators that he thought the program could be used quite effectively. He said his only negative concern was the bias toward the increase in taxes with which the program ended. He said that was a minor concern, however, because the students were mostly old enough to see through that and make up their own minds—as the classroom discussion had shown.

Later that day, a meeting was convened at the office of the social studies curriculum supervisor of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Also in attendance at the meeting were two of the supervisor's assistants and the North Carolina taxpayer education coordinator. Much of the early discussion was about the place of taxpayer education in the secondary education curriculum. The DPI staff allowed that in the overall scheme of social studies education tax education had a small niche, but said that it was very well defined. They made an analogy to banking. "We teach our students about banking. We teach them why banks exist and show how they function. In some courses we even teach about balancing a checkbook. But we don't teach them how to open an account or take out a loan."

The North Carolina curriculum guide specifically delineates the nature of taxpayer education in North Carolina high schools. (See Appendix B.)

The prospect of new programs generated several ideas. The two that most agreed would be used most frequently were history of taxation and overview description of types of taxes.

The idea that generated the most excitement, however, was how nations' philosophies and systems of taxation differ from each other. It was suggested that such a program could be used in a variety of classes such as sociology, economics, and general social studies.

The following, final day of the North Carolina field experience was spent in Greensboro talking with district-level social studies curriculum supervisors, business teachers, economics teachers, and Council for Economic Education personnel.

Generally, these people considered the present tax education materials effective but said that because so much had to be accomplished in a onesemester course, it was impossible to teach taxation as comprehensively as might otherwise be possible. Several economics texts were examined to see what emphasis they placed on taxation. None mentioned taxation until midway through the text. The director of the local Center for Economic Education remarked again how much there was to teach in economics outside of taxation. He said he thought the ***Tax Whys*** programs were very effective but that they would probably not receive widespread use until they related taxation more closely to other issues in economics education, such as the federal deficit or distribution of wealth.

The idea that learning about tax forms was motivational for students came up again. One of the curriculum supervisors said that students were eager to learn about tax returns because that was how they got their refunds and because it was something they had always seen their parents do.

Also that day, another occurrence demonstrated how separate *Understanding Taxes* and ***Tax Whys*** are. At a meeting of three business teachers, the field investigator showed a copy of an *Understanding Taxes* order form and asked whether all three teachers had heard of it. All three had heard of it and used it. The investigator then held up a copy of a ***Tax Whys*** student guide. One of the teachers said she was using it. The other two said they were not, although one of them had heard of it. The investigator asked the teacher who used *Understanding Taxes* and ***Tax Whys*** whether she knew they were designed to be used as part of the same package of instructional materials. She did not. She had heard of *Understanding Taxes* from IRS mailings and of ***Tax Whys*** by word of mouth. Her school was recording ***Tax Whys*** off the air for her from local instructional television broadcasts. There was absolutely no way for her to know that the two instructional packages were supposed to be related to each other.

San Francisco

Secondary social studies teachers in the San Francisco City School System were invited to a workshop scheduled for Friday, January 9. ***Tax Whys*** was originally scheduled to be a part of that workshop. In-service time, however, is very limited, and might even be referred to as a highly prized commodity. Administrators of the workshop changed the emphasis of the workshop from "materials for general use in social studies" to "some materials that were developed by San Francisco school teachers." This change bears no reflection on the quality or the usefulness of ***Tax Whys*** programs. It simply demonstrates the power of local priorities in determining the in-service agenda.

A frequently used distribution mechanism for ***Tax Whys*** is the in-service workshop. One of the San Francisco Center for Economic Education staff members explained teacher in-service in this context.

> "We like to distribute our materials through workshops. Not only does it place us in direct contact with the teachers, but it also gives us a chance to teach them more of the economic principles on which the programs are based, and it helps them use the materials more effectively.
>
> "The problem in San Francisco is that the city thinks the teachers already spend enough time in workshops. It's not so much the cost, although that's a factor, too, if you pay for substitutes, but it's just that they [the city administrators] want the teachers to spend most of their time in the classroom—and who can blame them?!"

Of course, in-servicing by the Centers for Economic Education is not the only distribution mechanism in San Francisco. KQED, the local PBS station, also regularly broadcasts ***Tax Whys*** into classrooms. Teachers may either use the broadcast directly or record the programs off-air for later use. KQED also sponsors workshops for teachers on the use of instructional television, which can include ***Tax Whys***.

Understanding Taxes is distributed through the taxpayer education coordinator's office in Oakland. The TPEC in Oakland is new at her position and recommended that an interview with the coordinator in San Jose or Sacramento might be more productive. A meeting was arranged with the San Jose TPEC, her assistant, and the director of the CEE at San Jose State. This was the first time they had met each other and all said they were only vaguely

aware of each other's programs. Before this meeting, the assistant to the TPEC had referred callers to the CEE for video programs, but this was the closest they had ever come to working together. The TPEC's assistant also said that when people called wanting video programs, it was usually because the ***Understanding Taxes*** films had been declared obsolete.

All parties at this meeting were satisfied with the effectiveness of the materials and the way in which they were distributed. The taxpayer education coordinator said, however, that she would like to be able to spend more time in classrooms, and the CEE director said that he too would like to have more contact with teachers. He indicated that the attitude toward in-servicing of teachers was much the same in the San Jose schools as it was in San Francisco. He further noted the difficulties of summer in-service training. Teachers want to be paid for taking a summer workshop and these costs would usually equal or exceed those of substitutes during the school year. Also, many teachers have summer jobs which they could not leave. He pointed out that the best time for teacher workshops was in the fall just before classes started but said that time was at a premium and difficult to get. [Note: Fall is also the time of year when most center directors are quite active in preparing for their professional responsibilities.]

Regarding the three new programs, all agreed that a program on the history of taxation would be useful. There was some disagreement, however, over the need for a program about filling out 1040 forms. From the center director's perspective, filling out forms was not related to economics education. Although the TPEC said that such a program would fit in well with *Understanding Taxes*, she had other concerns about the program. She did not see how such a program could be interesting, and was also concerned about the program's continuing usefulness as the tax forms change. She thought that a program describing all the forms a taxpayer might use and the various sources of public and private help for filling out forms ultimately might be more useful.

Other topics that people at this meeting thought merited consideration included the relation of taxation to the federal deficit and the trade imbalance, or a program on how taxes are collected and allocated.

There was one high school in San Jose where the teacher used both *Understanding Taxes* and ***Tax Whys.*** She was in an uncommon situation, teaching social studies at Presentation High School—an all-girl, Roman Catholic school. She taught economics in the fall semester and then again in the spring semester. The only improvement she recommended

was that she be able to receive the *Understanding Taxes* materials in the fall so that she could have the same materials for both semesters. When told that three programs were to be added to the ***Tax Whys*** series, she said that a program on how to fill out 1040 forms would be a nice introduction to the *Understanding Taxes* booklet. She said she would also like a program on "where the money goes after it's collected." Asked whether that meant the congressional budgeting process, she said, "Yes, that would be OK, but that's pretty much on the news. What I mean is more of how does the Congress get it in the first place. I think the students would be interested in knowing what the IRS actually does with the money when they receive it and how taxes actually flow through the government after they're collected."

Investigators visited Presentation High School on the day the class watched Program 3, "Taxes Involve Conflicting Goals." As class began, the tax profile from page 9 of the teacher's guide was already on the board. (See Appendix C.) The teacher asked whether all the girls had read the assignment from the ***Tax Whys*** student booklet. From the murmurings, one would gather that they had. The students were asked what would happen if families with very few deductions suddenly had a great many deductions. One girl said their taxes would go down and another said they would be very happy. Finally, one of the students offered, "If some families suddenly started paying less in taxes, then tax rates would have to be increased to make up for the lost revenues." This response occasioned murmurings of "yeah" and "uh-huh" as if this, finally, was the "correct" answer. The teacher then asked the girls to think about how they would feel if their income were the same as that of someone else, who paid much less in taxes. She asked them to watch the program with these feelings in mind and consider how such "discrepancies" might legitimately occur.

After watching the program the students discussed the effect of special interest groups on the taxation system. Their attitudes toward special interest groups were decidedly negative. ("They'll do anything to keep their taxes low while those of others increase." "They get their work done by knowing people rather than by doing work.") Then the teacher asked them, "Do you think you are part of any special interest groups?" They said "no" until one girl asked the teacher whether church schools might be part of a special interest group. At that the teacher said "yes" and made the point that special interest groups were neither good nor bad. They simply represented a singular point of view and had a distinct role to play in a democracy.

She then moved the class along by distributing the handout from the teacher's guide and talking with her students about the decision-making model used in the handout. Before the bell rang ending class, she assigned the handout as work to be turned in the following day.

The second day of the San Francisco field trip was used to visit three of the city's high schools and discuss ***Tax Whys*** with teachers who used it.

Teachers at San Lorenzo High and Arroyo High had been made aware of the ***Tax Whys*** programs by the California State CEE at Hayward. Four economics teachers were interviewed. Three of them used ***Tax Whys*** without the *Understanding Taxes* materials and one of the teachers used both sets of materials. They agreed that the programs were effective, although occasionally "corny." They thought that the program set in the mythical kingdom was especially corny. One teacher said she never introduced that particular program without warning the students that it might seem beneath them, but she always used that program because she thought it contained important content.

These teachers found the programs especially useful because of their motivational effect on the students. According to one of the teachers, "When I use the videos, they perk right up." They found this effect especially useful with their "slower" students but said it was helpful for their normal and advanced students also.

The teacher who used both series said she liked them together because they were so different. She described ***Tax Whys*** as "theoretical" and *Understanding Taxes* as "practical." She said she used only the first two chapters of the *Understanding Taxes* materials but all of the ***Tax Whys*** programs. She said that her students received the rest of the material that was in *Understanding Taxes* through their other courses.

When the discussion turned to topics for new programs, there was a surprising consensus among these teachers, even though they were interviewed separately. They all said that a program on how to fill out tax forms would be a useful topic presented in an unnecessary format. One teacher said she would prefer having computer software for this particular topic. They also agreed that a program on the history of taxation in the United States would not be useful for their economics classes. Most exciting to them was the idea of a program comparing the taxation of various countries. One teacher described that idea as being "absolutely lovely." They liked the suggestion of a program describing the effect of taxation on the federal deficit, international trade, and other similar issues. Two of the teachers who also taught government said such a program would be useful in either government or

economics courses. The other idea they found especially appealing was an overview program that would describe various types of taxes (e.g., property, sales, income, excise).

Tax education was also discussed with the economics teacher at Bohannon Continuation High School. (Note: In California, a "continuation high school" is a high school for students who are chronic truants, borderline delinquents, emotionally abused, or affected in some other way that might keep them from succeeding in a conventional high school.) Bohannon was included in this field study so that tax education could be viewed in an alternative environment.

The economics teacher used ***Tax Whys*** but not *Understanding Taxes*. She said she had seen *Understanding Taxes* and that it looked fine, but she already had enough to deal with without learning about new instructional materials. Possibly for the investigator's benefit, she allowed the possibility that she ought to look again at *Understanding Taxes*.

Her reaction to ***Tax Whys*** was quite positive. She said that any video worked well with her kids because she could use them in a "stop-start format." That is, she would begin the program and then stop it anytime she wanted her class to engage in discussion about a certain issue. She said that she thought the program comparing people's reactions to gasoline taxes and property taxes was the most effective. In addition, she liked most of the storylines in the ***Tax Whys*** programs.

Regarding the teacher's guides, all the teachers in these three schools thought they were effective and should not be changed. They agreed that a person had to read through the guides only once and that they contained much good information. What they liked most about the teachers' guides were the handouts included at the end of the booklet. They thought the pie charts and the decision-making matrix were the most effective handouts. (One teacher did note that the tax profile that compared two different families with incomes of $20,000 per year was "hardly applicable in California.")

So, in brief, a summary of the field studies would include the following points.

1. There is little perception that *Understanding Taxes* and ***Tax Whys*** are part of the same set of instruction materials.
2. This separation may not be bad. In fact, it may help the materials reach a wider audience.

3. The tax forms play two important roles in taxpayer education. First, they are a curiosity to students and serve a motivational function. Second, learning how to fill out the forms is a part of the "citizenship" education in which schools engage.
4. New programs that would fit with ***Tax Whys'*** perceived function of supplementing economics education would be enthusiastically received.
5. New programs that deal with the mechanics of taxation would also be used.

Survey

A part of the needs assessment was a written survey of teachers. Mailing lists were obtained from the National Council on Social Studies, the Joint Council on Economic Education, the American Association of Home Economists, and Quality Education Data (business teachers).

Surveys were sent to 2,890 teachers and 1,130 were returned for a response rate of 39.1%. The margin of error was 2.5%. For a distribution of the schools in the sample, see Table 1 below. The teachers in the sample had taught for an average of 16.8 years (standard deviation 8.5). For a distribution of the courses they taught, see Table 2 on the following page.

Table 1: The Schools

Rural Schools	18.8%	High Schools	79.8%
Town Schools	22.1%	Middle or Jr. High	20.2%
Suburban Schools	33.7%		
Urban Schools	19.4%	Public Schools	88.6%
Inner-City Schools	6.0%	Private Schools	11.4%

Table 2: The Teachers

Subjects Taught:	U.S. History	44.1%
	Economics	37.6%
	Government/Civics	32.4%
	Other History	23.9%
	General Social Studies	14.2%
	Home Economics	11.5%
	Business	8.8%
	Problems	5.5%

Most of the teachers (72.9%) said they teach taxation in their classes and three-quarters of the other teachers said they could get interested in teaching about taxation. Interestingly, however, fewer than half (41%) of all the teachers said they had received any special training in taxation. Most of the special training occurred either in undergraduate education or in in-service workshops.

Of the teachers who teach taxation, 32.9% had heard either of *Understanding Taxes* or of ***Tax Whys***; only 36.9% had heard of both. Of teachers who had heard of only one of the two series, many more knew *Understanding Taxes* than ***Tax Whys*** (28.6% and 4.3% respectively). Although a total of 65.5% of the teachers reported that they had heard of *Understanding Taxes*, only 34.3% said they were using it. Likewise for ***Tax Whys***, 41.2% said they had heard of it, but only 12.9% reported using it.

A few teachers reported that they had formerly used *Understanding Taxes* or ***Tax Whys*** but had stopped (5.1% and 2.5% respectively.) Reasons for stopping were usually related to class schedules and not to content. Two economics teachers did report, however, that they had stopped using *Understanding Taxes* because they thought that filling out 1040s was not relevant to an economics course. One of these teachers went on to report that he continued to use ***Tax Whys*** in his economics class and he knew business teachers in his school were using *Understanding Taxes*.

Teachers also reported using other materials to teach taxation. The textbook was the most frequently used source of information about taxation (46.2%) and newspaper and magazine articles were next (42.3%). *Understanding Taxes* and ***Tax Whys*** were respectively

the third and fourth most frequently used sources. Other materials that teachers mentioned included old college textbooks and materials from proprietary sources such as H & R Block or J. K. Lasser. Several teachers also mentioned wanting to know how to contact resource people at the IRS.

Regarding the time of year when taxation was taught, 36.7% said they taught it during "tax time" (i.e., January 1 through April 15) and 56.9% said "when it fits best with my curriculum." Most of the remaining teachers, only 6.3%, said they taught taxation when students asked questions about it. (One teacher did say he taught taxation "whenever my cousin's in town. She's an accountant.")

There was a change in the time of year during which taxation was taught when the sample was split between teachers who said they used only ***Tax Whys*** and teachers who said they used both or only *Understanding Taxes*. Of the teachers who used only ***Tax Whys***, 88.1% said they were guided by the curriculum rather than by the tax calendar in their use of the series. Perhaps this finding coincides with the field study finding that teachers who used only ***Tax Whys*** were also less interested in teaching students how to complete their tax returns than were teachers who utilized *Understanding Taxes*.

The rest of the survey information concerns only those teachers who used either *Understanding Taxes* or ***Tax Whys***.

The primary way in which teachers learned about the existence of *Understanding Taxes* was through the IRS. Almost half the teachers (40.2%) said they learned about *Understanding Taxes* this way. The second most frequent method of learning about *Understanding Taxes* was either directly or indirectly through the Joint Council on Economic Education. The third most common method was word of mouth. For ***Tax Whys***, the first two methods were reversed and word of mouth was still third. That is, more than half the users of ***Tax Whys*** had heard about it through the Joint Council and the second most frequent method of learning about it was through the IRS. For a fuller description of how teachers learned about these series, see Table 3 on the following page.

Table 3: How Teachers Hear About *Understanding Taxes* and *Tax Whys*

Understanding Taxes			*Tax Whys*		
IRS		40.2%	JCEE		53.9%
JCEE		24.8%	State Council	26.5%	
State Council	10.3%		University Center	17.1%	
University Center	9.3%		In-Service	10.3%	
In-Service	5.2%		IRS		21.4%
Word of Mouth		21.1%	Word of Mouth		15.4%
Other		13.9%	Other		9.3%

Eighty-seven percent of the teachers who used *Understanding Taxes* always used chapter two, "How to Prepare an Income Tax Return." About 80 percent of the teachers also reported using chapter one, "Taxpayer Rights and Responsibilities." The rest of the *Understanding Taxes* booklet was used by about a third to half of the teachers in the sample. So the primary use of *Understanding Taxes* is clearly to teach students how to prepare an income tax return. This finding is corroborated by the field studies.

Use of the various ***Tax Whys*** programs was more balanced. Each of the six programs was used by almost a third of the sample "every time [they taught] about taxation." No program seemed to receive more frequent use than any of the others.

Although the ***Understanding Taxes*** video programs have been declared obsolete, some teachers continue to use them. Roughly one-third of the sample reported that they still used "What Happened to My Paycheck?" "Money Talks," and "The Subject Was Taxes."

On the survey form, teachers were asked what materials were most necessary for helping students complete their tax returns. They were given four options.

- Practice tax forms
- Written instructions
- Film or video programs
- Annual updates from the IRS

Almost all the teachers checked all the options. No differentiation could be made that could help instructional materials designers decide which materials would be used most often.

Teachers were also asked what they would like to see in the teacher's guide. Practice tax forms were their highest priority, followed closely by student exercises and then class discussion questions. Background information of program topics was a distant fourth. Other suggestions from teachers included bibliographies and names of resource people who could talk to the class.

One of the main purposes of the survey was to ascertain what three topics teachers would like to see added to the ***Tax Whys*** series. They were asked to prioritize seven options which they did as follows.

First	How to fill out tax forms
Second	U.S. history of taxation
Third	How tax legislation is created and becomes law
Fourth	Philosophy of taxation
Fifth	How taxes are collected
Sixth	State income tax systems
Seventh	World history of taxation

It should be pointed out that although "How tax legislation is created and becomes law" and "Philosophy of taxation" were ranked third and fourth respectively, they were so close to each other that the difference was negligible. As a matter of fact, economics teachers reversed them. All other priorities remained the same across a wide variety of subsamples, including courses taught, years of experience with the instructional materials, and others. For a percentage breakdown of all of the survey items, see Appendix D.

Conclusions

Clearly, the tax education materials are well thought of among most secondary educators. *Understanding Taxes* is widely used and use of ***Tax Whys***, though not as pervasive as *Understanding Taxes*, is fairly well balanced throughout the country.

The two sets of materials, however, seem to serve different audiences. The 1040 forms are the "hook" that motivates students and teachers to use the *Understanding Taxes* materials. After teaching students their responsibilities as taxpayers and how to fill out their tax returns, teachers may move on to the history or politics of taxation (although many will not). The leading purpose of *Understanding Taxes* is to teach students how to fill out tax forms.

The ***Tax Whys*** programs, however, are used in economics classes as a supplement to the regular economics text—rarely as a supplement to *Understanding Taxes*. Most high school economics texts do not directly address the subject of taxation until at least halfway into the course. Consequently, the complete series of six programs is almost never used in a class.

So, while use of both *Understanding Taxes* and ***Tax Whys*** is common in United States secondary education, their combined use occurs infrequently—despite the original intent of the designers. There are at least two reasons for this—reasons that have an impact on the decision to make three more programs.

First, the programs are distributed through different channels. Rarely does either channel mention the other set of programs—either through personnel or printed materials.

Second, teachers who either use or have reviewed the materials perceive them as complementing each other, but not as being part of the same curricular package. Their theoretical foundations and uses are too different.

This brings us to the question of how IRS funds should be spent to improve education about the U.S. taxation system in the nation's secondary schools. Clearly, more funds are needed for in-servicing of teachers. One of the main distribution mechanisms for the ***Tax Whys*** programs is the in-service workshop, and until more workshop money is available, distribution and use of ***Tax Whys*** may remain limited. States might be open to the possibility of federal in-service funds being made available on a matching basis. In fact, this option was mentioned a couple of times in the field studies.

As to the question of what the three new programs should cover, this seems to depend on whether the programs' designers want to attempt once more to congeal the two parts of the curriculum into one, with the idea of increasing its impact. The designers may want to accept that what they have now are two separate programs—both of which are good—which reach two different audiences.

If program designers want to create a system of materials that teachers and curriculum supervisors will see as a united curriculum package, then it may make sense to produce a video program on how to fill out tax forms. A preponderance of teachers in the written survey seem to desire it. Programs on the history of taxation and on "where the money goes and how it gets there" might also be used quite frequently and would fit with the "practical" nature of *Understanding Taxes*. Programs about how tax legislation is created and about various philosophies of taxation could perhaps also be considered.

If, however, program designers want to enlarge what is seen as a good system of video programs on taxation and want to help those programs further achieve the curricular integrity that they already appear to have, a program on how to fill out tax forms would seem to be in conflict with the current perceptions of ***Tax Whys*** as a "theoretical" program series. Programs on the history of taxation, the relationship between taxation and fis-cal policy, and the taxation systems of different countries would seem to fit into this category much more soundly.

Finally, whether or not another attempt is to be made to bring the print and video systems together, it would make sense to begin using the print of one set of materials as a way to inform teachers about the other set of materials. Also, in the field studies, teachers and curriculum supervisors responded very favorably to the idea of a single teachers' guide that would be used for both sets of materials. Not only would such a guide inform teachers who are using only one set of the materials about the other set, but it would help teachers using both sets realize that the materials are meant as complements to each other. This would enable teachers to get more of the potential educational effectiveness out of the materials through their combined use.

Appendix A

Telephone Interview Questionnaire

TAX EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Telephone Interview Form
October-November 1986

Name _____

Position _____

Date _____ Phone Number _____

Brief Description of your job as it relates to tax education materials:

How are tax education materials used in your area? What materials receive the most use? What time of the year and in what courses are tax education materials used?

How many teachers are you in contact with?

_____ teachers per _____. This comprises about _____ percent of the relevant teachers in my geographical area.

About what percentage of the teachers in your area who could use tax education materials, do use tax education materials?

_____

How many schools in your area have a complete set of the TAX WHYS tapes or films? "Understanding Taxes" booklets?

Please give us some indication of teacher response to tax education materials that you have made available.

What is your personal opinion about the instructional effectiveness and the general appeal for target-age students of the:

"Understanding Taxes" Booklet
What are the most or the least useful parts of the booklet?

TAX WHYS Films
What are the most or the least useful films?

"Understanding Taxes" Films

What, in your opinion, are the voids in the curriculum? How would you describe the depth and scope of the materials as they exist?

Describe the various sources and types of training in tax education that are available to your teachers?

Regarding the tax education materials for which you are responsible, what is the most effective way of contacting teachers about their availability or updates?

Are teacher workshops necessary if teachers are to use the materials effectively? If so, please discuss that.

What is your opinion of the workshop leaders' handbook? What are the most and least useful aspects of it?

We are producing three new films. What should they be about? (If the respondent has no ideas, suggest: history of taxation; recent changes in tax laws; macroeconomic theory and taxation; philosophies of taxation; political process of taxation; how to fill out tax forms.)

Could you please identify two teachers who you think we should talk with. One teacher who uses the tax education materials effectively and one who may have used them in the past but has stopped or has indicated in any other way the he or she is dissatisfied with the assistance we are providing in tax education.

Name of Interviewer _____

Appendix B

North Carolina Curriculum Guide (Taxpayer Education Section)

Skills/Subject Area: Social Studies/Knowledge

COMPETENCY GOAL 8: The learner will know that there is disagreement as to the role of government in the economy.

Objectives	Measures
8.2.5	Correctly complete the following: One of the reasons a government might reduce taxes is to a. slow down the rate of inflation. b. slow down the rapid rise of interest rates. c. increase consumer spending and stimulate the economy. d. help finance space exploration and a trip to the moon.

Skills/Subject Area: Social Studies/Knowledge

COMPETENCY GOAL 8: The learner will know that there is disagreement as to the role of government in the economy.

Objectives	Measures
8.3 Identify examples of regressive, progressive, and proportional taxes; and construct arguments for and against each.	8.3.1 Complete tasks such as the following: Given a checklist of a variety of kinds of taxes, identify each as regressive, progressive, or proportional. a. food sales tax b. the federal income tax c. a tax of 2% on the assessed value of real estate
	8.3.2 Complete tasks such as the following: North Carolinians pay a sales tax on food. Explain why you are for or against this tax.
	8.3.3 Correctly complete the following statement: Those who believe that people should be taxed according to their ability to pay would most likely favor a. an excise tax. b. a general sales tax. c. a progressive sales tax. d. a residential property tax.

Skills/Subject Area: Social Studies/Knowledge

COMPETENCY GOAL 8: The learner will know that there is disagreement as to the role of government in the economy.

Objectives		Measures
	8.3.4	An income tax is considered progressive if a. the absolute tax varies directly with the income. b. the tax percentage is the same regardless of income. c. the tax percentage increases as income increases. d. the tax is used to build better roads and schools.
8.4 Explain the relationship between the levels of taxation and the volume of government goods and services provided.	8.4.1	Given an appropriate form and hypothetical wage and tax information, prepare a salary stub showing gross income and various tax deductions. List ways these tax deductions are used.
	8.4.2	Given a list of buildings and places within a city and/or county, categorize those that are privately supported and those that are publicly supported.
	8.4.3	Given appropriate data, compare the tax rate in nearby towns and or counties, and the extent of government services they offer.

Appendix C

Tax Profile from *Tax Whys* Teacher's Guide

One-Year Tax Profile

	The Smith Family	The Jones Family
Wage and Salary Income:	$25,000	$25,000
Number of Children	2	2
Mortgage Interest Paid Last Year:	$ 6,000 (just bought house)	$ 0 (rent house)
Other Interest Paid:	$ 2,500	$ 0
IRAs (Individual Retirement Accounts):	$ 4,000	$ 0
Taxable Interest Income Earned:	$ 0	$ 700 (saving to buy a new house)
Deductible Medical Expenses:	$ 1,000	$ 0
Charitable Contributions:	$ 200	$ 0

Appendix D

Percentage Breakdown of All Survey Items

Results of Written Survey of Teachers

Is your school public or private?

	Frequency	Percentage
Public	962	88.6
Private	124	11.4
Total	1086	100.0

Is your school rural, town, suburban, urban or inner city?

	Frequency	Percentage
Rural	182	18.8
Town	214	22.0
Suburban	328	33.8
Urban	188	19.4
Inner City	58	6.0
Total	970	100.0

Do you teach in a high school or a junior or middle school?

	Frequency	Percentage
High school	902	79.8
Junior/Middle	228	20.2
Total	1130	100.0

How many years have you taught?

	Frequency	Percentage
1-5	84	8.0
6-10	168	16.2
11-15	212	20.4
16-20	264	25.4
over 20	312	30.0
Total	1040	100.0

What courses do you teach?

	Frequency	Percentage*
Economics	424	37.6
U. S. History	498	44.1
Other History	270	23.9
General S. S.	160	14.2
Govern./Civics	366	32.4
Contem. Pro.	62	5.5
Home Ec.	130	11.5
Business	100	8.8
	Total	178.0

* Sum exceeds 100% because of teachers who teach more than one kind of course.

Do you teach about taxation?

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	302	27.1
No	814	72.9
Total	1116	100.0

If so, at what grade level?

	Frequency	Percentage
7th	32	4.0
8th	68	8.5
9th	88	11.0
10th	88	11.0
11th	166	20.8
12th	356	44.7
Total	798	100.0

If not, do you have any interest in teaching about taxation?

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	906	82.4
No	194	17.6
Total	1100	100.0

Have you had any specific training in how to teach about taxation?

	Frequency	Percentage
Undergrade	172	15.6
Grad School	76	6.7
In-service	150	13.6
Other	56	5.1
None	662	59.0
Total	1116	100.0

Have you ever heard of the *Understanding Taxes* or of the *Tax Whys* instructional materials?

	Frequency	Percentage
Both	276	36.9
Tax Whys	32	4.3
Understanding Taxes	214	28.6
Neither	226	30.2
Total	748	100.0

What materials do you use to teach about the U. S. system of taxation?

	Frequency	Percentage
Text	522	46.2
Periodicals	478	42.3
Understanding Taxes	388	34.3
Tax Whys	146	12.9
Other	106	9.4

Please check either or both of the following comments if they apply to you.

	Frequency	Percentage
Used "*Understanding Taxes* but stopped	58	5.1
Used ***Tax Whys*** but stopped	28	2.5

When do you teach about personal taxation?

	Frequency	Percentage
"Tax time"	302	26.7
Fits best in curriculum	468	41.4
Other	52	4.6

How did you learn about the *Understanding Taxes* materials?

	Frequency	Percentage
State Council on Econ. Ed.	40	10.3
Univ. Center for Econ. Ed.	36	9.3
IRS	156	40.2
Word of mouth	82	21.1
In-service workshop	20	5.2
Periodical	2	0.5
Other	52	13.4
Total	388	100.0

How did you learn about the *Tax Whys*materials?

	Frequency	Percentage
State Council on Econ. Ed.	62	26.5
Univ. Center for Econ. Ed.	40	17.1
IRS	50	21.3
Word of mouth	36	15.4
In-service	24	10.3
Periodical	4	1.7
Other	18	7.7
Total	234	100.0

For how long have you been using *Understanding Taxes*?

	Frequency	Percentage
One year	46	11.6
2-3 years	82	20.7
4-6 years	90	22.7
7-10 years	144	36.4
do not use	32	8.1
Total	394	100.0

For how long have you been using *Tax Whys*?

	Frequency	Percentage
One year	14	4.2
2-3 years	60	18.3
4-6 years	58	17.7
7-10 years	34	10.4
Do not use	164	49.4
Total	330	100.0

Please describe your use of *Understanding Taxes*, Chaper 1—Taxpayer Responsibilities and Rights.

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	276	80.7
Use if time permits	42	12.3
Never use	10	2.9
Never heard of	14	4.1
Total	342	100.0

Please describe your use of *Understanding Taxes*, Chapter 2—How to Prepare an Income Tax Return.

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	310	86.6
Use if time permits	26	7.3
Never use	14	3.9
Never heard of	8	2.2
Total	358	100.0

Please describe your use of *Understanding Taxes*, Chapter 3—History of Taxation.

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	160	47.6
Use if time permits	128	38.1
Never use	42	12.5
Never heard of	6	1.8
Total	336	100.0

Please decribe your use of *Understanding Taxes*, Chapter 4—Economics of Taxation.

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	174	51.2
Use if time permits	102	30.0
Never use	52	15.3
Never heard of	12	3.5
Total	340	100.0

Please decribe your use of *Understanding Taxes*, Chapter 5—Politics of Taxation.

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	110	34.6
Use if time permits	114	35.8
Never use	82	25.8
Never heard of	12	3.8
Total	318	100.0

Please describe your use of *Understanding Taxes*, Chapter 6—State Taxes.

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	148	46.2
Use if time permits	88	27.5
Never use	68	21.2
Never heard of	16	5.1
Total	320	100.0

Please describe your use of *Understanding Taxes*, Chapter 7—Facts and Fallacies about IRS.

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	72	23.5
Use if time permits	134	43.8
Never use	74	24.2
Never heard of	26	8.5
Total	306	100.0

Please describe your use of *Tax Whys*: Taxes Raise Revenue.

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	80	36.0
Use if time permits	38	17.2
Never use	54	24.3
Never heard of	50	22.5
Total	222	100.0

Please describe your use of *Tax Whys*: Taxes Influence Behavior.

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	76	35.2
Use if time permits	34	15.7
Never use	52	24.1
Never heard of	54	25.0
Total	216	100.0

Please describe your use of *Tax Whys*: Taxes Involve Conflicting Goals.

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	66	30.8
Use if time permits	40	18.7
Never use	52	24.3
Never heard of	56	26.2
Total	214	100.0

Please describe your use of *Tax Whys*: Taxes Affect Different Income Groups.

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	70	32.1
Use if time permits	38	17.4
Never use	56	25.7
Never heard of	54	24.8
Total	218	100.0

Please describe your use of *Tax Whys*: Taxes... Can they be shifted?

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	64	29.6
Use if time permits	38	17.6
Never use	58	26.9
Never heard of	56	25.9
Total	216	100.0

Please describe your use of *Tax Whys*: Taxes... What is fair?

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	76	34.2
Use if time permits	38	15.3
Never use	58	25.2
Never heard of	56	25.3
Total	228	100.0

Please describe your use of IRS Tax Education Film: "What Happened to My Paycheck?"

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	64	27.3
Use if time permits	54	23.1
Never use	58	24.8
Never heard of	58	24.8
Total	234	100.0

Please describe your use of IRS Tax Education Film: "Money Talks."

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	68	30.7
Use if time permits	46	19.7
Never use	58	24.8
Never heard of	58	24.8
Total	230	100.0

Please describe your use of IRS Tax Education Film: "The Subject Was Taxes."

	Frequency	Percentage
Use every time	64	27.4
Use if time permits	46	19.7
Never use	60	25.4
Never heard of	64	27.5
Total	234	100.0

Of the following, what new films do you think should be produced. (3 points for a 1st priority; 2 points for a 2nd priority; 1 point for a 3rd priority.)

Subject	Total Points
How to Fill Out Tax Forms	662
U. S. History of Taxation	410
How Tax Legislation Is Created and Becomes Law	336
Philosophy of Taxation	330
How Taxes Are Collected	244
State Income Tax Systems	178
World History of Taxation	84

What materials would you find especially hepful in teaching students how to fill out tax forms?

	Frequency	Percentage
Practice Tax Forms	322	94.7
Written Instructions	228	67.1
Film or Video Programs	254	74.7
Annual Updates from the IRS	232	68.2

What would you most like to see in the teachers' guide that will accompany the new programs? (Please check two from the list below.)

	Frequency	Percentage
Student Exercises	330	97.1
Class Discussion Questions	182	53.5
Practice Tax Forms	268	78.9
Background Information on the Program Topic	96	28.2

Together... serving education.

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